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LETTER DATED 7 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have been asked to inform you that Mr. David Andrews, T.D., Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland, in the capacity of Personal Representative of the Presidency of the European Union, observed the popular consultation in East Timor on 30 August 1999. The Minister, in this capacity, sent to Ambassador Jamsheed Marker, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to the Head of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), Mr. Ian Martin, a composite report of the European Union observer groups who also observed the consultation process.

Following your announcement, on 3 September 1999, that the outcome of the ballot reflected the expression of the democratic will of the people of East Timor, Minister Andrews reported last weekend on the outcome of the process to other European Union foreign ministers at their informal meeting in Saariselka, Finland. He indicated that, while the very high turnout of registered voters, and the orderly and peaceful conduct of the poll represented a great success for the people of East Timor and for UNAMET, there were growing concerns about the security situation on the ground and the apparent failure of the Indonesian security forces to provide protection for the citizens of East Timor.

Since then, a critical situation has developed, with the breakdown of law and order, and reports of widespread killings and other violations of human rights. It is the view of the Irish Government that the manifest failure of the Indonesian security forces to discharge their obligations under the 5 May 1999 agreement on security arrangements (A/53/951-S/1999/513, annex III), and the intimidation of the United Nations and other international personnel, are matters of the gravest concern. In the absence of any effective action by the Indonesian security forces, there is a risk that the outcome of the referendum may be vitiated.

Noting that the Security Council is seized of the issue, and that an important Security Council mission is currently conducting talks in Jakarta, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland wishes to convey the view of the Irish Government that, if Indonesia is unable to maintain security in East Timor, other possibilities must be examined and that, in this context, Ireland would support the deployment of an agreed peacekeeping force.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Richard RYAN
Permanent Representative